

The
WHITE PINE
SERIES OF
Architectural Monographs
Volume VIII *Number 1*

PORT TOWNS *of*
PENOBSCOT BAY

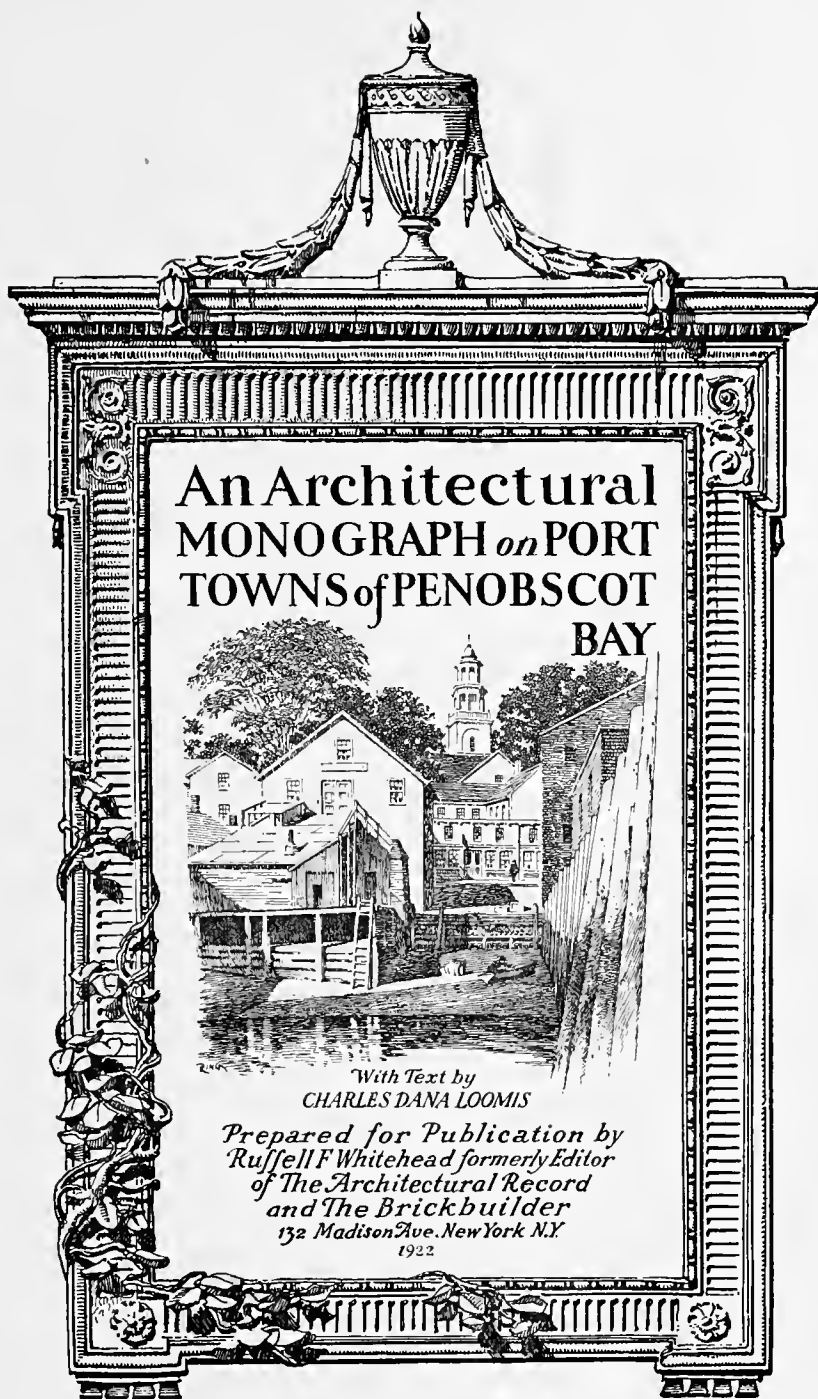
*Programme of Seventh Annual
Architectural Competition
on Pages Fifteen and Sixteen*

*With Introductory Text by
Charles Dana Loomis*

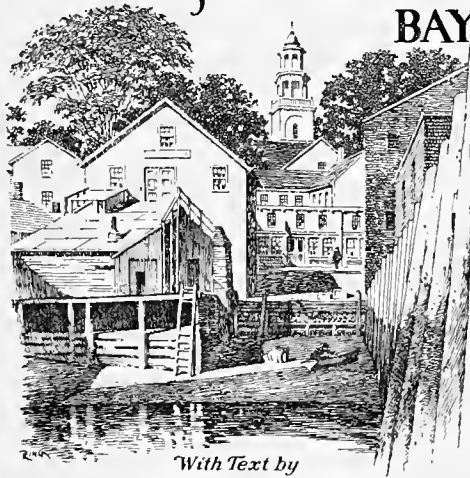
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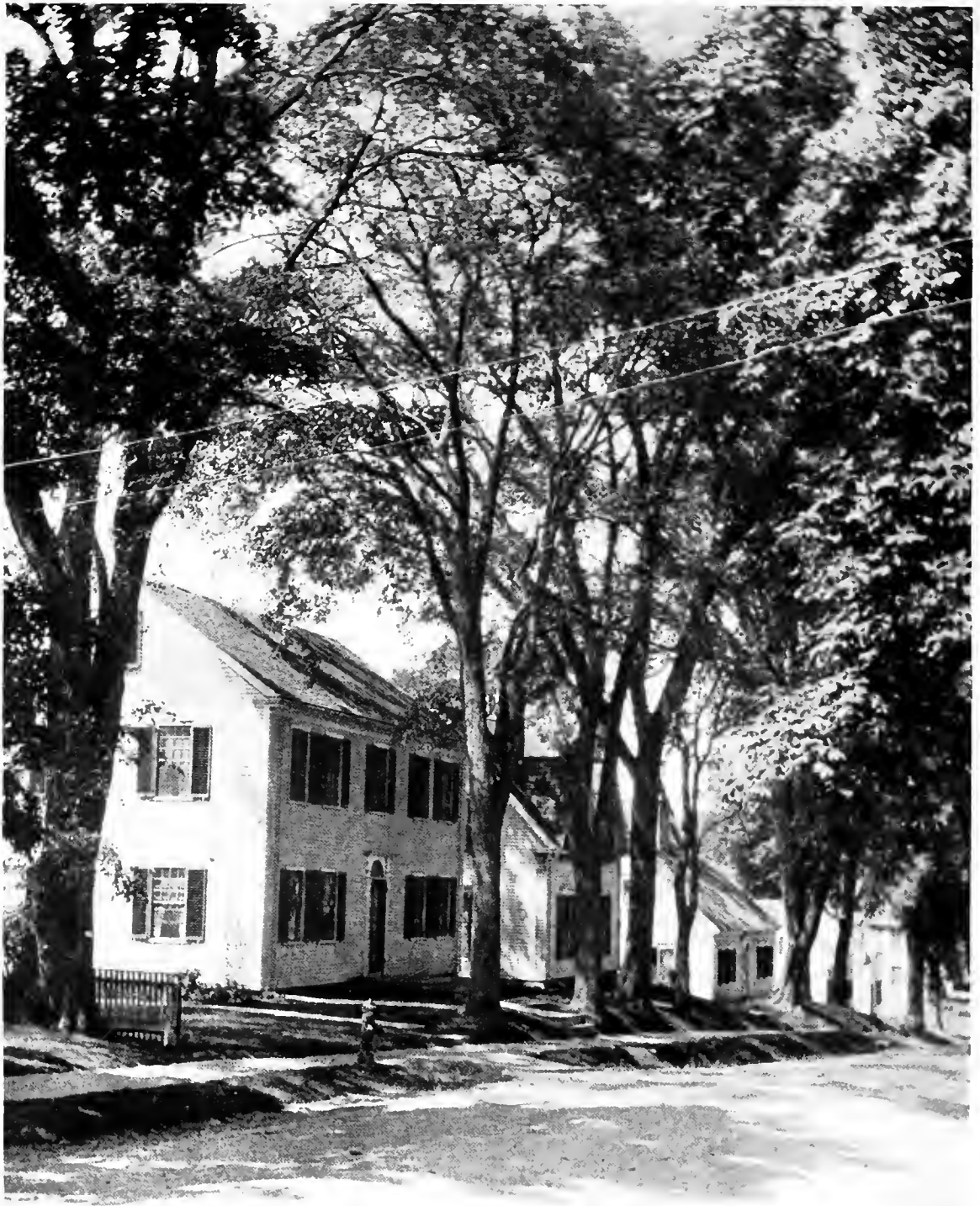


An Architectural
MONOGRAPH on PORT
TOWNS of PENOBSCOT
BAY



With Text by
CHARLES DANA LOOMIS

Prepared for Publication by
Russell F Whitehead formerly Editor
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and The Brickbuilder
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1922



CHESTNUT STREET, CAMDEN, MAINE.

The WHITE PINE SERIES of ARCHITECTURAL MONOGRAPHS

A BI-MONTHLY PUBLICATION SUGGESTING THE
ARCHITECTURAL USES OF WHITE PINE AND ITS
AVAILABILITY TODAY AS A STRUCTURAL WOOD

Vol. VIII

FEBRUARY, 1922

No. 1

PORT TOWNS OF PENOBSCOT BAY

By CHARLES DANA LOOMIS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR AND DOROTHY ABBOT LOOMIS

DOWN EAST! How many people in these United States think at once of the rustic paraphernalia of our famous drama. But east of Boston rather than "north of Boston" lies territory rich in the history of our country. East again of the Kennebec, the traveler will find places that can still show him how the country became great, provided he turn thoughtful eyes upon them.

Three names of Maine towns on Penobscot Bay will have a familiar sound to very many ears—Camden, Belfast, Castine. It was to see for ourselves what these names were attached to that we sailed up the coast from Boston, and climbed onto the little pier under the Camden hills in very good time for the last of a remarkably fine sunrise. The rugged, barrier hills behind, the little harbor below, were a delight to the eye, but the gigantic tops of serried elms climbing away to right and left along the foreshore, the peeping white gables, and jutting massive chimneys, spoke so eloquently of old days and a long past that all doubts were gone, and we could concentrate on breakfast reassured and expectant.

After the fashion of the eighteenth-century novelist, we will leave the travelers to their refreshment and rest, and moralize at our leisure. Here is the place to make it clear that what we hoped to find were old pine-built houses worthy of record in the *White Pine Series*, and to picture what we found as monuments to a fine past and lessons for a worthy future, if you please. Looking over the whole collection of pictures, and condensing all our impressions, a general character of houses seemed so apparent that we have sought the why and wherefore, and want to try to picture this character as it was borne out by

the stories of our towns, and the lives of the people who built our houses, and the kind of world they lived in.

Names have a very effective way of cutting through the layers of time to the little kernel of event that matters, and here are three names that hint at stories: Camden; there is a Camden-town in London to-day. Belfast; Irish linen, shipyards, and Orangemen. Castine; Mediterranean, Latin, French, certainly not Anglo-Saxon; and there we have stories well begun.

Penobscot Bay was early known as a splendid waterway, marvelously timbered and desirable, which lay so midway between French Acadia and English Virginia that no man could safely say that King James or King Louis was lord of the realm. Its waters were explored first in 1605. France established a trading-post in 1629, at Bagaduce, which later became Castine. This they counted as their western outpost, and claimed all to the east of the bay as French. Later they found the Penobscot River was the great winter highway from Quebec to the Atlantic, so that the English coveted Castine, at the mouth of the river, and at last closed this door to France.

The Council of Plymouth received title to all the western shores of the bay from James I, and from this original grant, through inheritance and deed, title passed to a group of heirs. These gentlemen had great difficulties with one David Dunbar, "Surveyor of the king's woods," who requisitioned the entire coast for trees to make masts for the English navy, and forcibly stopped all colonization. The upshot of the matter was that Waldo went to London for the grantees and the Waldo Patent was confirmed in 1731. It was in 1769 that the first settler was given pos-

session here at Camden by the "Twenty Associates," as the company of heirs was called. The town had already been named after Lord Camden, Waldo's "friend at court" during the action for the grant. The place was a hamlet when the Revolution came, and the settlers must have been terribly isolated. Small British privateers, known as "Shaving Mills," swept the coast and raided Camden, sometimes with success but often the honors did not go to the king's men.

At this time Belfast also had been settled, not like Camden, by individuals sent out by a com-

enterprising soldier of fortune. He was a power with his Indian allies, and is said to have married among them. As governor or commandant of what must have been a mere trading-post and fort, he at least left his name for the place, which was later abandoned by the French, and finally resettled by the English in 1761. The French name does not appear to have been used until after the Revolution. The fate of the Bagaduce expedition by the Americans against this British fort may have led the townspeople to seek a name of better omen when their liberty had been won.



THE CARLETON HOUSE, CAMDEN, MAINE.

pany, but by a group of people whose fathers fifty years before, in 1718, had fled from North Ireland to Boston, settled Londonderry, N. H., and started the Irish potato in New England with poetic justice to become one of Maine's chief industries. A man, by name John Mitchell, came to the Belfast district, saw, and returned, to bring thirty-five of his friends, who promptly bought the site and petitioned for their ancestral name to be given it.

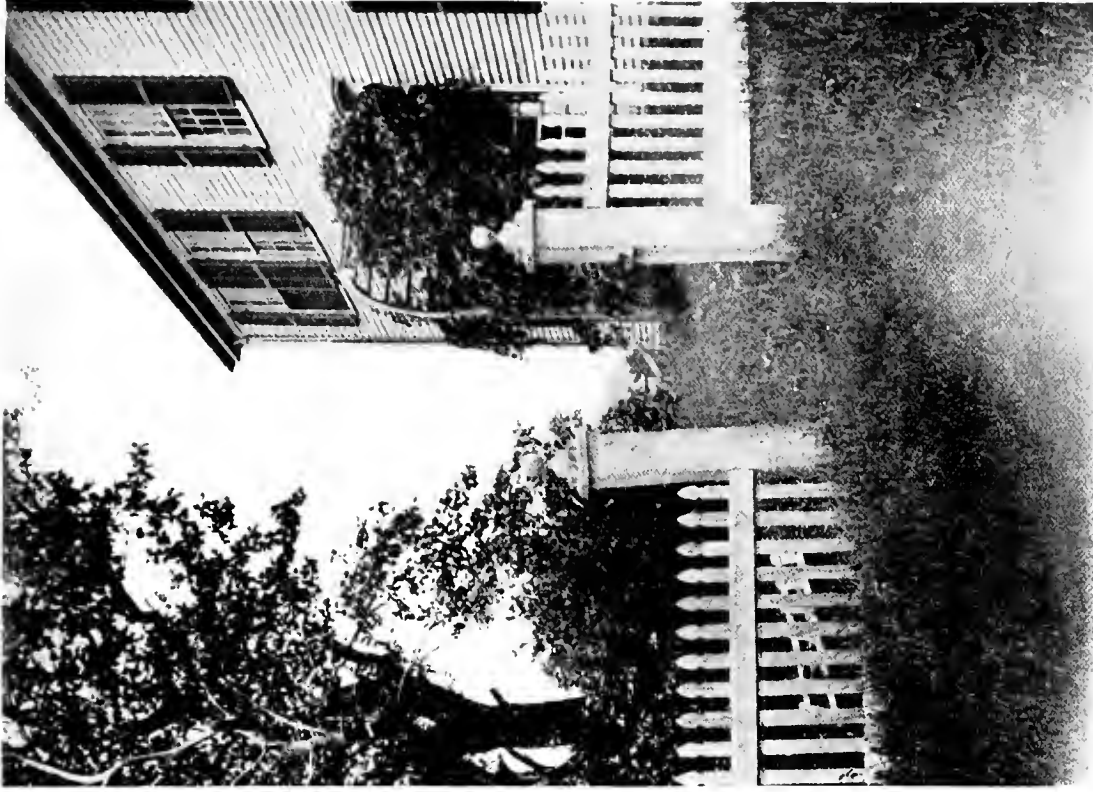
Castine, which now bears the name of a Count de Castine, a family since wiped out in France by the Revolution, was for a long time known as Bagaduce. The gentleman whose name it now bears was evidently an adventurous and

All this is to paint our picture of coast villages, kept from growing to towns first by the unpleasant relations of French and English and then by our own war for independence. So it was that most of our houses had to wait for their builders until the Revolution had been fought, and we can see what sort of towns the Yankees could, by sheer grit, bring into being during our lean and hungry "critical period" from 1790 to 1812. For these houses must have echoed to the rumors and alarms of the War of 1812.

Compared to most of the material that the *White Pine Series* has published, these buildings are definitely simple and austere. The character of the times is written broadly across their al-

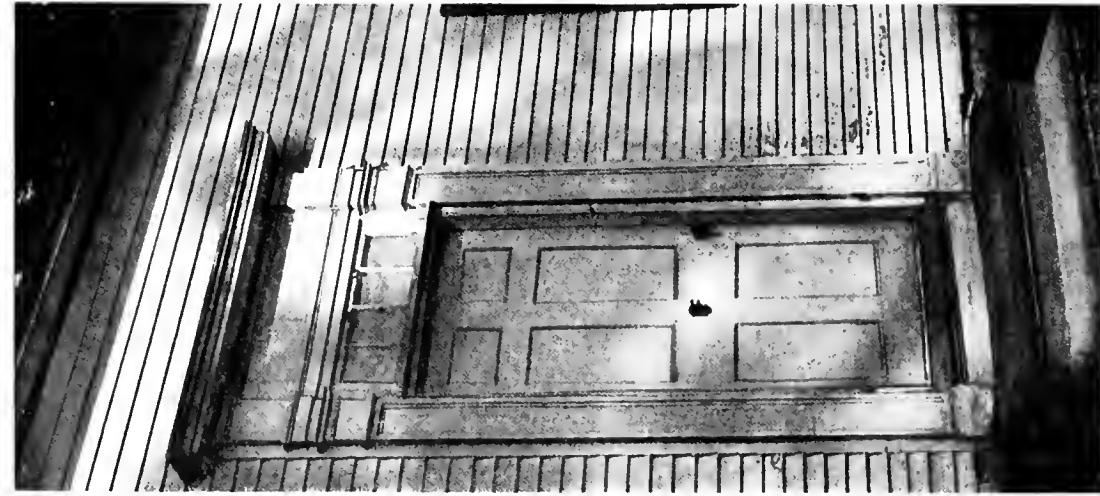


Detail of Doorway.



Detail of Main Façade.

THE CARLETON HOUSE, CAMDEN, MAINE.



Cottage on Mountain Street.



The Metcalf Cottage, Elm Street.



Miss Smart's Cottage, Chestnut Street.

THREE DOORWAYS IN CAMDEN, MAINE.

most gaunt faces. But, nevertheless, there is a real charm and an admirable character to such gauntness, especially when it is a characteristic developed on a face where inheritance and breeding are fine. That these builders were men of Massachusetts, with the background of Salem, Newburyport, Boston, Plymouth, and the settled stateliness of the Old Colony, there can be no doubt. It is interesting to see what they retained

was the best known of the three during the days of the American sailing ships, and was the home of a fleet of merchant sailors who made every port from Liverpool to Bangkok. "Castine" was painted under the stern of many a wind jammer known in the Indies and the China Seas.

Though our houses must have been nearly coeval, they divide into three general types: the one-story cottage, the two-story gabled farm-



HOUSE ON CHESTNUT STREET, CAMDEN, MAINE.

of their birthright, and what their modest means obliged them to forego.

In Camden the simpler types prevail and there is little rich detail. In Belfast a large number of Neo-Grec or Classic Revival houses complicate the situation. They give the town an air almost of opulence, and date its heyday thirty years later than Camden, in the time when whaling and lumber were beginning to make men's fortunes. All this work we have purposely omitted and stuck to the houses of earlier date. In Castine, both the fullness of detail and its very "colonial" character point both to an earlier date and a less limited financial condition. This town

house, and the square, hipped-roof mansion, with interior chimneys.

In Camden we have the three types all well represented. Of the cottage types only the doorways have been chosen for reproduction, but the pictures on page six give one a fair idea of the height of the façade, the ample wall, and widely spaced windows. The very considerable height from window head to cornice should be noted. This logical result of a good half-story under the roof is often slighted in our modern adaptations, to the detriment of the façade. All these cottages were originally built with a large central chimney, and a minute stairway, built between



THE SMALL HOUSE, BELFAST, MAINE.



THE STEVENS HOUSE, BELFAST, MAINE.

chimney and front door, in a tiny entrance hall. Of the gabled farm-houses, two in Camden, one shown in the frontispiece and one on page seven, and a fine example in Belfast, on page eight, with arched entrance doors both on the street and in the gable end, illustrate this more commodious type of dwelling enlarged from the cottage. They still have considerable length of plan and the great central chimney.

The more well-to-do citizens, however, seem to have universally seized on the square plan, with two chimneys built into the cross wall di-

Castine, these houses all show decidedly the thrice removed influence of the illustrious Adam brothers. The universally over-delicate mouldings, the lack of projection of the cornices, the very delicate sash and window frames, the almost universal frontispiece door, in preference to a porch, point not so much to poverty as to the following of a model. The model is not hard to find in Massachusetts, where the Adam influence came by way of the handbooks from England. These books are well known, and were the usual guides of the carpenter designers. The



THE BENJAMIN FIELD HOUSE, BELFAST, MAINE.

viding the front from the back rooms. The great depth of plan resulting from such a scheme necessitated the hip roof, and the pitch seems to have been flattened through economy even lower than the Massachusetts prototype. In every case the fenestration is excellent, the openings broad and ample, and the wall spaces kept even wider than the windows, commonly by grouping the side windows in pairs and thus gaining exterior wall surface even when the shutters were open. With no exceptions the windows were kept well away from the corners, and all the houses show a fine wide corner "pier" and have a resulting air of solidity.

With the possible exception of those in

restraint of this work in Maine cannot be entirely ascribed to poverty, for the mouldings are good in profile, the doorways well designed, and the finish never stinted. It would have cost no more to coarsen all the detail, or to misplace the motives of the composition. They succeeded in achieving a grand manner in the most straightforward way. They stuck to good proportion, they used forms throughout which had been demonstrated successful for execution in wood, and they erred on the side of simplicity and thinness of details, both admirable faults in buildings built of wood. Clapboards were kept uniformly very narrow, and even the side and cross rails of the shutters were made narrow on



Detail of Corner.



Detail of Side Porch.

THE JOHNSON HOUSE, CASTINE, MAINE.

the face, to keep in scale with the other detail: no attempt was made to use stone derived quoins, cornices, or pilasters, and the frontispiece doorways were so refined and attenuated as to lose their stone-cut character. These are as frankly wood built houses as could be asked for.

A few of the details are worth notice. The frontispiece doorways nearly all have the overhead fanlight in form of an arch either round or elliptical, sometimes glazed, sometimes filled with a wooden slab fan. Is it not possible that

photograph of the Johnson house in Castine, page eleven, are frequent and deserve respectful study for their wooden scale and richness combined with simplicity. Notice, too, in this picture the thoroughly workmanlike and pleasing way in which the brick end has been joined with the clapboarded front. It becomes frankly a brick end due to two enormous end chimneys, and not a brick house finished with wood, as sometimes appears when the thickness of the brick wall shows on the front. The little side porch of this house is mainly wood—no attempt



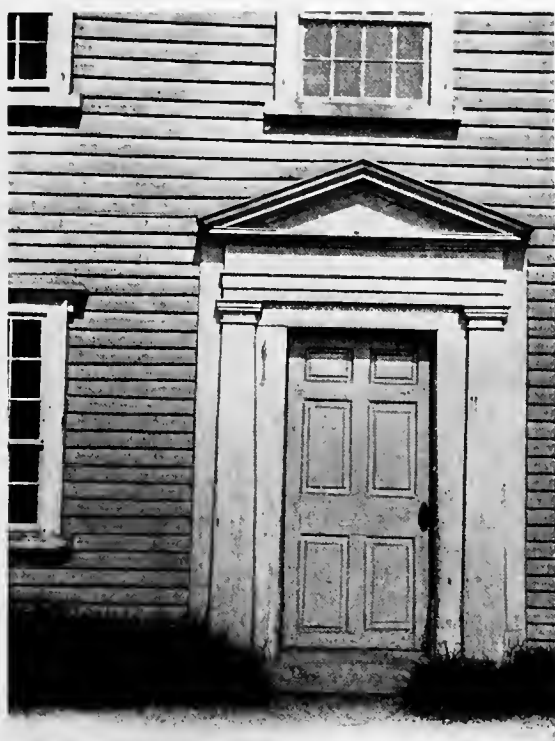
THE PERKINS HOUSE, CASTINE, MAINE. Built 1769.

the absence of porches is partly due to the extremely mild summers, and the dark winters, requiring maximum light in the stair hall entry? It is noticeable that the doors are frequently fitted with slat shutters, which again shows the desire for a modified ventilation in the breezy summer afternoons. It is a pity that so many of the present owners have painted their sash black or dark green. The loss of the sparkle of the brilliant muntins in the dark openings is a serious one. Screens and screen doors are accursed by photographers of architecture. Some one can make a fortune by the invention of an invisible screen door, but not too invisible.

Cornices of the general type shown in the

here to ape stone forms. The cap is gotten out of one stick with the shaft, and the diminution and entasis result. The stable wing of the Adams house at Castine, shown on page thirteen, is certainly playful enough use of stone forms. This is not a "functional arcade," but it is good carpentry, and pretty good composition too.

Lack of space forbids the reproduction of the little church on the green at Castine. It is a smaller scale variant of the Belfast church (suggested in the drawing on the title page), and the latter was probably built afterward, and is doubtless an echo. It is certainly more successful as far as the tower goes, and shows improvements in detail but lacks the charm of the little



DOORWAY.
THE PERKINS HOUSE, CASTINE, MAINE.

one-story structure, which, without galleries, can have a fine side-window motive.

The Perkins house at Castine must be placed in a paragraph by itself. It stands alone among our collection as a pre-Revolutionary example. The mass and the character are frankly English, foursquare, and solid. It is evident that the ell toward the road is an addition, in fact the patching of the clapboarding is visible in the photograph. Neither Asher Benjamin nor Batty Langley had anything to do with this house. The steep pitch of the roof, the heavy solid frames of the windows, moulded and doweled, projecting far outside the clapboards, the unevenly divided sash with twenty lights, the blunt cornice, nowhere show the Adam influence. In fact the date of the original house is 1769, and the addition can have been but little later. The vestibule porch is comparatively modern, but is well handled and adds materially to the general effect of the house.

The detail photograph of the doorway gives one also a fair idea of the window frames and sash, and the unusual location of the glass practically on the same plane as the clapboards. This detail also occurs in the oldest house in Camden, otherwise ruinously altered. It may be a stretch of the imagination, but in contrast to all our

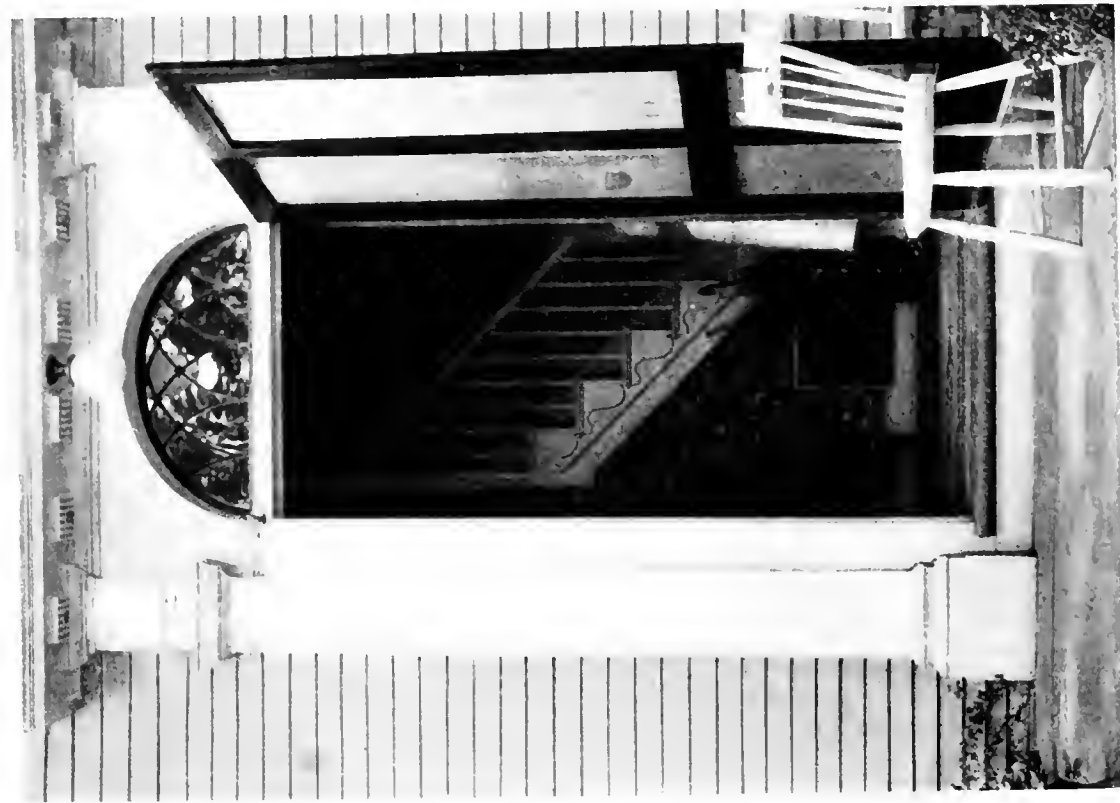
other doorways this seems to be much more obviously of stone origin. Its wide, flat faces and broad, well-curved mouldings and thick fillets are much more early Georgian than what we usually call Colonial. Perhaps the model came rather from Sir William Chambers than Robert Adam. Notice, too, the excessive entasis of the pilasters.

That no one ever reads an architectural article to the bitter end is a commonplace among architects, so perhaps we are safe in stepping out before the falling curtain and speaking an epilogue to the empty house. Let us be as old-fashioned as our houses, and point a moral.

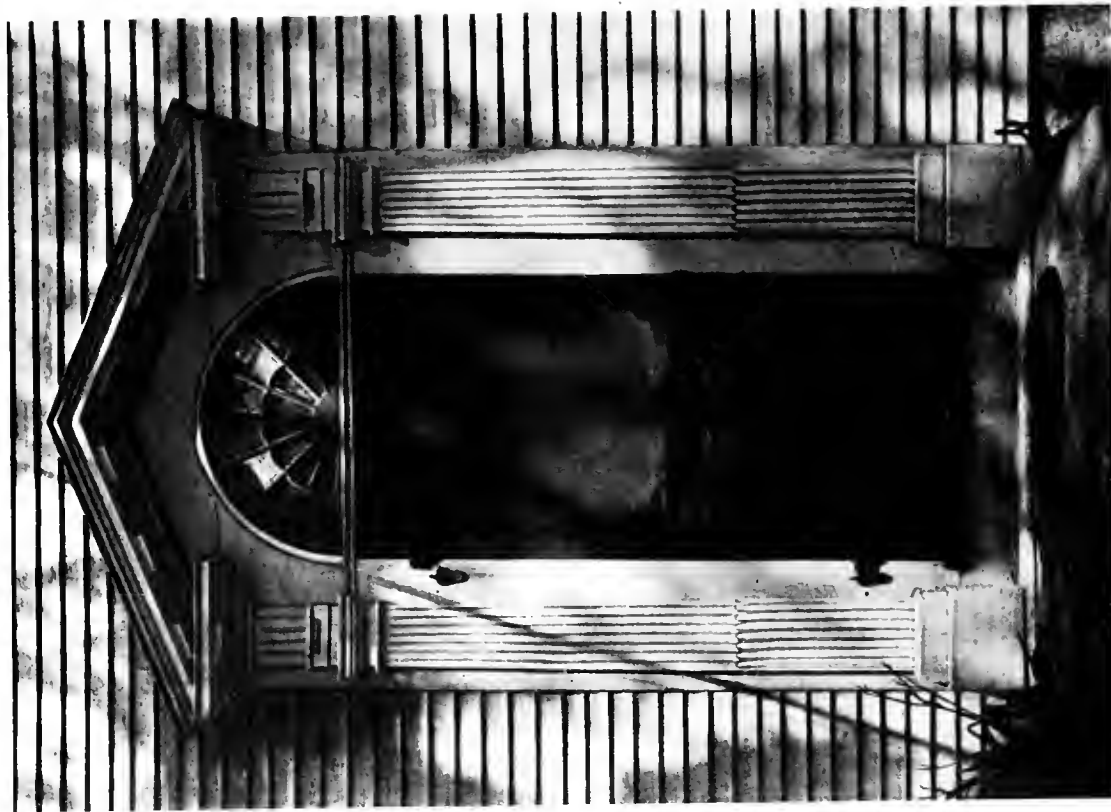
In these days, when financial solons cry to the world, "Work and save," and the man in the street sees dollars grow as big as harvest moons, the simple house of wood is suddenly a thing of virtue, preaching economy by the roadside. These Penobscot houses, simple to baldness, built in similar stringent times, embody all the virtues we would like to practise: rigid economy, dignity, good taste, good proportion, refinement, honesty, and, in spite of austerity, charm. If any of our pictures or any of our words help toward these results in the plain houses of today, this article has not been amiss.



STABLE WING.
THE ADAMS HOUSE, CASTINE, MAINE.



The Stevens House.



The Tilden House (Built 1796).

TWO DOORWAYS AT BELFAST, MAINE.

SEVENTH ANNUAL WHITE PINE ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION

PROGRAMME FOR A COUNTRY CHURCH AND SUNDAY SCHOOL BUILDING WITH RESIDENCE FOR THE MINISTER

By E. DONALD ROBB

PRIZES AND MENTIONS

Design placed first will receive - - \$750.00
Design placed second will receive - - 400.00
Design placed third will receive - - 250.00
Design placed fourth will receive - - 100.00

SIX MENTIONS

JURY OF AWARD

Bertram G. Goodhue - - - New York
Edward B. Green - - - Buffalo
Thomas R. Kimball - - - Omaha
Charles T. Maginnis - - - Boston
C. C. Zantlinger - - - Philadelphia

Architects and Architectural Draughtsmen are Cordially Invited to Compete

Competition closes at 5 p.m., Monday, May 1, 1922

Judgment, May 12 and 13, 1922

THE revival of the stone Gothic church in the early years of the nineteenth century put a temporary check to the traditional American custom of building churches of wood, after the manner of Trinity Church, Newport, R. I., and the First Congregational Church at Lyme, Conn.

Although the architectural fashion changed, the use of the earlier material persisted for a long time into the Victorian Gothic days, and the distinctively wooden architecture of the century before gave place to the style characterized by the boxed buttress and pinnacle, and the furred and plastered vault. Very little attention was paid to the relation of the material to the design, an indigenous architectural style was abandoned, the noble Gothic was burlesqued, and a valuable local building material misused by those unthinking builders of the nineteenth century.

Having passed with more or less safety through the Era of Bad Taste, we are now observing a general revival of the use of White Pine for exterior trim in those architectural forms employed by the early American builders. The early churches of the Colonial days offer a prototype which is peculiarly suited to the non-liturgical services of many Protestant denominations. As compared with the more solemn Gothic, it has the advantage of being less expensive to build—it is much easier to produce a satisfying result with a small outlay—the problem of seeing and hearing is more easily solved, and, when well done, it blends more harmoniously with the average American landscape.

G— is a small New England village which, until quite recently, has been almost entirely ignored by the chorographers. Although its history dates back to early Colonial days, this charming little community might never have arrived on the map had it not been for the sudden advance in the price of potatoes, during the early days of the World War. This important commodity has for generations been raised in large quantities by the natives; and not

only has it been their chief source of income, but it has furnished them with an inexhaustible topic of conversation during the long winter days and evenings while they foregathered around the stove in the General Store. With the increase in the price of these the chief product of their labors, wealth began to flow into the village; its shabby and weatherworn cottages began to appear in white and green; its ancient Dobbins gave place to flivvers; and its sons and daughters were sent off to the colleges to complete their education. In fact, the whole aspect of the place changed with the advent of prosperity; that is, the aspect of everything except the village church on the Main Street near the watering trough. This church, dating from 1850 and the principal church in the community, began to seem strangely ill at ease and out of place among the bright little houses that began to display their pleasing proportions along Main Street.

The sons and daughters of the village, returning, diplomas in hand and brimful of culture, denounced the building as an eyesore, its tottering pinnacles and sand-encrusted battlements not worth repairing. A "drive" was started for funds with which to build a new structure which would be an ornament to the town and a worthy center for its religious life. As the site was the best in the village, and commanded a fine view down the road to the saw-mill, it was decided to raze the old building to the ground and rebuild on the same property, without regard, even, to the old foundations.

It was just at this point that the Methodists, being without a minister and having under consideration an offer from a motion picture concern for the purchase of their property, decided to combine with the Congregationalists and thus promote the interests of Christian unity. A joint building committee having been formed, it was found that their needs resolved themselves into the following:

PROBLEM

A Church building proper to seat approximately 350 and to contain a gallery large enough to accommodate a double quartette. This gallery may be at either end of the auditorium. Convenient to the Choir Gallery, a Choir Practice Room with coat room and toilets for men and women. A Minister's Room, 150 sq. ft., should adjoin the Chancel and be provided with coat closet and toilet.

A Sunday School Building directly connected with the Church, but not necessarily arranged to open into it. Main Auditorium to seat approximately 225, with stage suitable for simple entertainments. Eight classrooms, 100 sq. ft. each, will be needed for the various grades of the Sunday School. These may be partitioned from the main seating space by curtains or by folding screens, or may be in separate rooms.

In addition to this, a Kindergarten, 350 sq. ft., with a sunny exposure; a room of approximately the same size, which may be used both as a Men's Bible Class Room and as a Parish Parlor. Toilets and coat rooms for men and women. A Kitchen and Pantry, 800 sq. ft., connected with the Auditorium.

A Manse, or residence for the minister, to contain, on the ground floor, Living Room, Study, Dining Room, Kitchen and Pantry. On the second floor, four Bedrooms and two Baths. The attic will be unfinished but should be large enough for one Bedroom and Bath and a small Storeroom. A one-car garage.

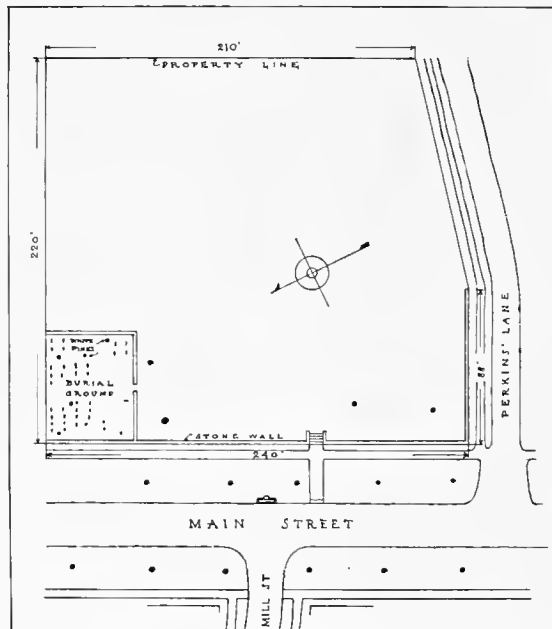
All the outside finish for the three buildings, including siding and corner boards, window sash, frames and casings, outside blinds, all exposed porch and balcony lumber, cornice boards, brackets, ornaments, mouldings, etc., *not* including shingles, is to be of White Pine.

The ancient burial ground at the corner of the property, although not now in use, should not be disturbed; and the competitor is requested to spare as many of the fine elms and white pines as possible.

Accommodations for automobiles should be provided at the rear of the lot.

As the site is an important one and the church the principal one in the village, it is suggested that a tower, with or without a spire, be incorporated in the design.

A plot plan of the property is shown below. The grade is approximately level and about $2\frac{1}{2}$ ft. above the sidewalk. All corners of the lot are right angles except the two on Perkins' Lane. The stone retaining wall on two sides of the property is to be kept, but the entrance steps may be moved if the competitor so desires.



PLOT PLAN OF PROPERTY.

IT IS REQUIRED TO SHOW: A pen and ink perspective of the entire group projected from a $1/8$ th inch scale plan and clearly indicating the character of the exterior finish.

A plot plan at $1/32$ nd inch scale.

A first floor plan of the Church and Sunday School Building at $1/16$ th inch scale.

A second floor plan of such portions of the Church and Sunday School Building as may be necessary to illustrate the scheme, at $1/16$ th inch scale.

A front elevation and one side elevation of the Church at $1/16$ th inch scale.

A cross section through the Church at $1/16$ th inch scale.

Plans of two floors of the Minister's Residence at $1/8$ th inch scale.

A front and one side elevation of the Minister's Residence at $1/16$ th inch scale.

Detail drawings at $3/4$ " scale of such features of the group as the contestant may select to exhibit his ability and taste, and to present the subject attractively.

Graphic scales must be shown in all cases.

JUDGMENT: The Jury of Award will consider the architectural merit of the design and the ingenuity shown in the development of the plans; the fitness of the design to express a wood-built building; the appropriateness of the design to the given site. Excellence of rendering of the perspective, while desirable, will not have undue weight with the Jury, in comparison with their estimate of the contestant's ability if otherwise shown.

The Jury will positively not consider designs which do not conform in all respects to the conditions of the Competition.

PRESENTATION: Drawings are to be shown on two sheets only. Each sheet is to be exactly $26" \times 34\frac{1}{2}"$. Plain border lines are to be drawn so that the space inside them will be exactly $25" \times 33\frac{1}{2}"$. Whatman or similar *white* paper is to be used. Bristol board or thin paper is prohibited, and no drawings are to be presented mounted. All drawings must be made in BLACK ink. Diluted ink is particularly *prohibited*. Color or wash on the drawings will not be permitted. There is to be printed on the drawings as space may permit: "DESIGN FOR A WHITE PINE COUNTRY CHURCH." The drawings are to be signed by a *nom de plume* or device.

DELIVERY OF DRAWINGS: The drawings are to be rolled in a strong tube, not less than 3" in diameter, or enclosed between stiff corrugated boards, and sent to Russell F. Whitehead, Editor, 132 Madison Ave., New York, N. Y., to reach him on or before Monday, May 1, 1922. Enclosed with the drawings is to be a sealed envelope, bearing on the outside the chosen *nom de plume*, and on the inside the true name and address of the contestant. Drawings sent by mail must be at the first-class postage rate.

Drawings submitted in this competition are at the owner's risk from the time they are sent until they are returned, although reasonable care will be exercised in their handling and keeping.

THE PRIZE DESIGNS are to become the property of *The White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs*, and the right is reserved by this publication to publish any or all of the other drawings.

PUBLICATION OF DESIGNS: The Prize and Mention drawings will be published in the August, 1922, number of the Monograph Series; a copy of this issue will be sent to each competitor.

Where drawings are published or exhibited the contestant's full name and address will be given and all enquiries regarding his work will be forwarded to him.

RETURN OF DRAWINGS: The authors of non-premiated designs will have their drawings returned, postage prepaid, direct from the Editor's office.

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